

girl, "they are very
beautiful."

"yes, they are," said the other
girl, "thank you very
much."

they walked off down the street
and I got into my car,
it started, and
I drove back to my
place.

MADMAN

being
checked into a cell at L.A. City jail I
was still a bit drunk
there was a back-up of prisoners
nobody noticed me smoking this cigarette
until some ash dumped off the end
then a cop screamed at me about how
"they kept this fucking place CLEAN!"
"oh," I said, and then the cop said,
"wise fuckers, huh? ... o.k., now you
get it!"
and he pushed me into this room and
locked the door behind
me
and here behind this yellow thick
wire was this total
madman
he saw me and screamed
ran full force toward me
smashed into the wire
bounced back
rushed the wire again
grabbing it
shaking it
wanting to get through it
trying to get at me
trying to kill me

it was fearful
but I was drunk
found another cigarette
lit it
pushed it through the wire
expecting to get my hand ripped
away
he took the smoke

put it to his lips
inhaled
exhaled

I lit up
also
and we stood
smoking.

that's the way the cop
found us
when he opened the door
behind
me.

"son of a bitch," he said, "that's
beautiful, I wish I could let
you go."

"I wish you could too,"
I told him.

"let's go," he
said.

as we walked toward the door
the madman grabbed the wires and
screamed
screamed
he rattled and banged the
wires
those thick yellow wires
with the yellow paint flaking off
showing areas of
steady grey
beneath.

THE MIRROR GAME

Peter was the freak, Peter was fat, Peter
was dumb, Peter was clumsy, Peter stuttered
and Peter stumbled and the girls giggled at
Peter and the boys taunted him, and Peter
was kept after school and Peter's glasses
always fell off of his nose and his shoe-
laces were untied and his shirttail hung
out and his clothing was unlike anything
sold in the stores and Peter always sat
in a back seat with lines of snot dripping
from his nose.